GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

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THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

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General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

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TAGGING FISH TO LEARN FACTS ABOUT THEIR HABITS

(See Bulletin No. 3)

HOW TO OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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A New Victory for Sanitation

SHOULD a fire sweep through a children's hospital in Santiago, Chile, and snuff out the lives of 789 little children, millions would feel keenest sympathy and presidents and kings would send messages of condolence.

Less spectacular, but far more cheering, is the actual news that 789 lives of children under one year old have been saved in a six months' period in that one city.

And the United States had an important part in this magic boon of modern medicine.

The circumstances emerge into the news because of the announcement of the new sanitary code regulations and the decision of the U. S. Public Health Service to permit Dr. J. D. Long, of its staff, to remain in Santiago as technical adviser to the Chilian Ministry of Hygiene.

Repaying Medicinal Favors

"It seems only a bit of poetic justice that the United States should minister to the land whose deserts make the world's gardens grow and bind the sores and wounds of mankind, for those are the effects of the nitrates and the iodine that Chile exports," says a bulletin of the National Geographic Society.

"Medicine has wrought powerful changes in the geography of the world," the bulletin continues. "Quinine, for example, has been man's chief ally in conquering the tropics. And recent applications of medical science have been estimated to have saved more lives among the Allied nations since the World War than were lost in that titanic struggle.

"Now Chile, by the creation of its National Health Service, with the assistance of the expert from our country, has embarked upon a program which she believes, at a conservative estimate, will save her nearly 30,000 lives a year.

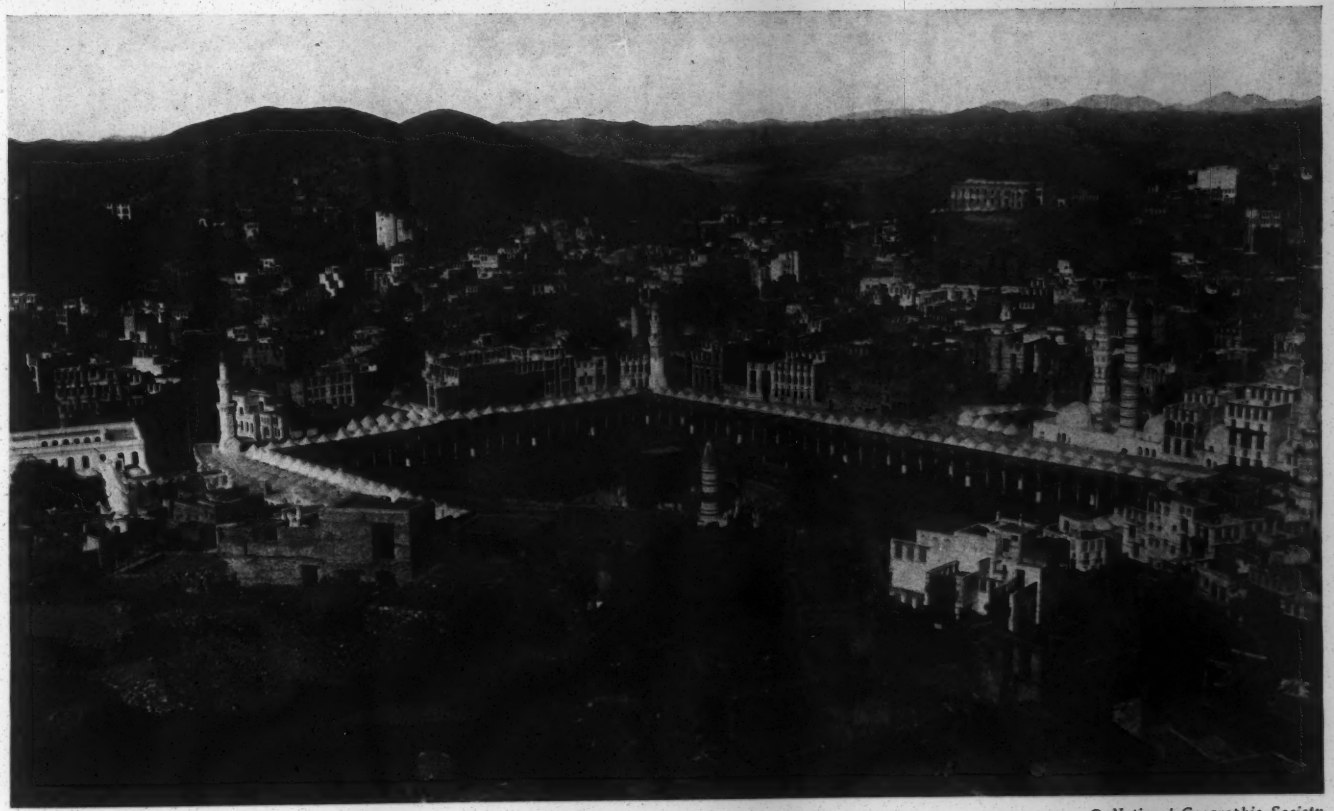
Better Health Means Cheaper Prices

"Such a program, through the length of her 2,700 miles, from the nitrate beds of Taripaca to the forests of Tierra del Fuego, and her rich intermediate belts of copper, iron, fruits and the only sizable coal deposits in South America, will have an important bearing upon her future geography and upon the world supply of the raw materials and resources she possesses.

"An official resume of the work performed by the National Health Service since its inception last year, just received at the headquarters of the National Geographic Society, tells how a fly-elimination campaign, thorough refuse removal, and certain other sanitary provisions, resulted in cutting down the infant mortality rate during the last six months of 1925 by 45.4 per cent over the deaths of 1923; and showed a falling off of 31.4 per cent in the number of deaths in 1925 over those of 1924.

What Chile Has Done

"The elongated republic, with its one-fourth area of islands, has been divided into ten sanitary zones, a corps of health officers has been created, quarantine regulations have been put into effect, physicians licensed and compelled to report communicable diseases, sewage disposal plants installed in small communities,



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BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF MECCA, THE RELIGIOUS CAPITAL OF ISLAM

"So we have made you the center of the nations that you should bear witness to men," wrote Mohammed in the second chapter of his book. In fulfillment of that prophecy, this city is the sanctuary and the goal of pilgrimage for one-seventh of the human race. The court, the black cloaked Ka-aba, and the other objects within the inclosure are described in Bulletin No. 4.

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The Oxus River, Which Has Left Its Stream Bed

THE OXUS River has left its course, according to news from Asia.

If search for the Oxus' mouth is made on all well-known oceans or arms of the sea, the seeker will be convinced that the river is a myth created by the poet, especially if he has read Matthew Arnold's "Sohrab and Rustum." The Oxus empties into the Aral Sea. The Aral Sea is sucked up by the sun.

The Oxus, or Amu Daria as it is called locally, rises in the lofty Pamirs near the common corner of Russian, Afghan, and Chinese territory. For nearly 500 miles it runs through a narrow, deep gorge. Then the mountainous banks fall back, and it suddenly becomes a river of the plains. This character it keeps for its remaining 200 miles along the Russo-Afghan border, as well as for the final 500 miles during which it strikes across the Bokharan and Khivan plains to the Aral Sea.

The Oxus' Vagaries Endanger Cotton Crop

Once we have located the Oxus, the next question is: What difference does it make if the Oxus does change its course? Isn't this region the home of nomadic tribes? Isn't it a grazing country where sheep and goats are raised for their wool which is woven into oriental rugs for American living rooms?

Former Turkestan bordering the Oxus is more than a grazing country. More and more it is becoming a cotton country. As in Egypt, the cotton growers along the Oxus must have water. In recent years great quantities of water destined for the Aral Sea have been guided away through irrigation ditches to cotton fields. So it is very important to the growers if the Oxus changes its course and dries up their irrigation canals. The news reports further state that the government and the growers are uniting forces to bring the river back under control.

The Bokharan bank of the Oxus Valley, after the river leaves its gorge, is more fertile than the Afghan side. Reed swamps border the stream on the Afghan bank. Then comes a strip of willow and tamarisk jungle which extends to the edge of the flood plain where the elevated desert begins. Game abounds in this jungle, even tigers. At places, however, the Afghans have cleared the immediate river valley, have constructed irrigation works, and carefully cultivate the land.

Oldest Russian Border in Asia

The Oxus River has the distinction of standing longer as a Russian boundary in southwest Asia than any other natural feature. One of the outstanding works of empire-building during the nineteenth century was the glacierlike but sure advance of Russia toward India. That advance profoundly affected British diplomacy and kept British military men constantly on a nervous tension. Khokand was gobbled up in 1863, Bokhara in 1868, and Khiva in 1873. Some people had visions of a great Russian army some day swarming through the Khyber Pass on to the plains of India in a drive to make that peninsula a part of the Muscovite dominions.

To combat this possibility Great Britain sought to encourage a strong Afghan state as a buffer. By 1885 she induced Russia to join her in the forma-

municipal sanitary codes drafted and physical examinations of school children are being gradually provided.

"Infant mortality in Chile has been approximately one-third the total mortality. Of those babies that die under one year of age about 60 per cent die under one month old. Therefore, the report states, a great saving of life, perhaps from 80 to 90 per cent of these deaths, will be prevented by proper hospital maternity provision for mothers.

"Four cities, Santiago, Los Leones, San Antonio and Talca, henceforth are to have their water supplies sterilized with chlorine. Certain cities which have had inadequate water for domestic purposes, including Valparaiso, are being surveyed for an augmented supply.

"In the water shortage, many towns suffer from a condition which makes for Chile's prosperity. Northern Chile is the one arid region of the world which doesn't want more rain. If the climate changed and heavy rains fell periodically the water would gradually dissolve the nitrate and wash away the country's unique reservoir of wealth."

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THE BAY AND CITY: VALPARAISO, CHILE

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The Present and Future of American Fisheries

FISH, peanuts and bananas will be important world foods of the future, predicts a biologist, who points out that many present foods require too much land and too much labor to grow.

For example, it is estimated that from 8 to 15 loaves of bread can be made from the grain it takes to produce one pound of beef.

The possibility of the greater use of our food resources is pointed out in an article "Fish and Fisheries of Our North Atlantic Seaboard," by John Oliver LaGorce, Vice-President of the National Geographic Society, from which the following extracts are taken:

"As the population of America grows we shall follow Europe in the utilization of marine resources to supplement our land crops. Today we eat only about a third as much fish per capita as the people of Europe.

"We have overfished a few of our species, but the great majority have barely been touched. Even those which constitute our principal fisheries are yielding, with few exceptions, only a fraction of what they could offer, if marketing facilities were better.

Boston is the Fishing Capital of the New World

"Boston is easily the fishing capital of the New World, and yields only to Grimsby, England, as the world's leading fishing port.

"In the United States fisheries north of Delaware Bay, the Menhaden takes first rank in the weight of the catch, with 256,000,000 pounds to its credit.

"There is a wide gap between it and the next group, which includes the Herring, Haddock, and Cod, with 98,000,000, 89,000,000, and 86,000,000 pounds, respectively, as the weights of their annual catches.

"The abounding wealth of the United States and the high per capita income of the people made them able to indulge their whims rather than their needs for food. Therefore the food they select, both from land and sea, has been chosen more from the standpoint of flavor than from that of nourishing qualities. The choice cuts of beef and the choice varieties of fish are taken and the remainder all but discarded.

"They have been particularly slow to adopt new salt-water fishes in their diet. What was ignored yesterday comes into the market today, and tomorrow it acquires a vogue.

"Three basic handicaps—perishability of the product, unevenness or uncertainty of supply, and unsteady consumer demand—have kept the fresh-fish industry from developing as it should.

"But lately ways are being discovered to overcome the perishability of fish. Methods of precooling have been found by which the fish can be frozen as soon as taken, in low-temperature brine, insuring the thorough cooling of every shred before chemical change sets in.

"Then the fish is encased in an individual film of ice and sent to market. The housewise who buys her fish in this ice jacket can then know it is perfectly fresh, having been kept so from the hour it was caught.

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tion of a Russo-Afghan boundary commission which settled on the Oxus as the boundary between the two countries, for some 680 miles of its length. Since then there has been constant competition of British and Russian commercial and political agents, each trying to gain the upper hand in Afghanistan; but the Oxus has remained the boundary between Russian and Afghan territory.

The world has learned few details of happenings in the Oxus Valley in recent years. Afghanistan is a self-elected hermit nation, a buffer for news as well as for politics. Little information has leaked out through Soviet Russia. Before the World War Russia had built the long Trans-Caspian railway through her southern Asiatic dominions. One branch line ran to the non-Oxus border of Afghanistan near the northeastern corner of Persia.

A second branch was under construction from Bokhara to the Oxus. For the past few years this road has been shown on maps as completed through Kalif on the Oxus, along the river to Termez, about midway of the northern Afghan border. More recent British information, however, is that the road would be completed early this year.

A Novel Kind of "Horse-drawn" Ferry

At Kalif is the busiest Oxus ferry. Horsepower is employed in this ferry in a unique way. From the front of a large flat-boat two poles extend out over the water. A rope is suspended from the end of each pole and tied to a belly-band, passed around a horse. Thus the ferry supports the animals, and they, swimming at ease, tow the loaded boat from bank to bank.

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KARAKUL LAMB AND EWES AT BOKHARA ON THE BANKS OF THE OXUS

The kindly shepherd vies with the soft-eyed ewe in caring for the wobbly-kneed youngster that is so soon to sacrifice his curly coat to make a cloak for an American lady of fashion. Throughout the Near East there is a community of life and trust between the sheep and his shepherd which has been the theme of many a prose poem since the time when David, the shepherd boy, sang the song that has cheered the ages: "The Lord is my shepherd."

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Cut Prices for the Hadj to Mecca

"SPRING tour, easy, safe and inexpensive. Not for Christians."

Such is King Ibn Saud's "advertisement" of the Hadj for Mohammedan pilgrims in 1926.

Already Egypt has taken Ibn Saud, new ruler of Mecca and Jidda, at his word. Egypt announces it will resume its practice of sending a huge holy carpet to cover the Ka-aba at Mecca. The gift has been withheld during the last few years because of the turmoil. It is only since last spring that Ibn Saud, leader of the Wahabis from Interior Arabia, has completed the conquest of Hedjaz.

Ibn Saud has put a stop to profiteering by standardizing the fare from the port of Jidda to Mecca at the equivalent of $2.50. The pilgrim can take his choice between camel or automobile. Unwary Mohammedans have paid as high as $100 for the 46-mile trip in the past.

Every religion has had its pilgrimages, but there is connected with no other faith a pilgrimage quite like that which the Moslem calls "the Hadj." To make a comparison we can suppose that the Sermon on the Mount made a trip to Jerusalem of vital importance to Christians or that one of the Ten Commandments ordered such a journey. For the making of the Hadj, or pilgrimage to Mecca is one of the five basic principles of Mohammedanism. It ranks with the worship of God and the saying of daily prayers. So it becomes the duty of each Moslem who is born into the faith or who adopts it to visit the holy city of his religion at least once.

A City Which 200,000,000 People Hope to Visit

Mecca is a city with about the population of Schenectady, New York, or Jacksonville, Florida, which more than 200,000,000 people either have visited or hope to visit. It has no rail connections; it is surrounded by deserts; it has no extensive hotels to care for great crowds. Yet yearly 200,000 people, it is estimated, visit it. Nearly half of them come at one time.

No non-Moslems are permitted to go closer than Jidda, the port of Mecca, 46 miles from the holy city; nor are they permitted to enter Medina, burial place of Mohammed. A few daring, adventurous Christians, however, have disguised themselves as Moslems and have gone to Mecca during the Hadj. From them and from a few Moslem writers the world now knows of the queer and rather trivial ceremonies for which so many Mohammedans make the hard journey to Mecca.

A communication to the National Geographic Society describes the ceremonies of the annual Hadj, as follows:

Though in a Desert, Mecca Has Suffered Floods

"The houses in Mecca are built of dark stone and are elevated in order to accommodate as many pilgrims as possible. The streets are nearly all unpaved. In the summer they are full of dust, and in the rainy season—which, fortunately, is not frequent—they are black with mud.

"Strangely enough, although the city is poorly provided with water except for the famous spring of Zem Zem, Mecca has suffered more than once from

Fish Ponds For American Farms

"That fish from the sea will help solve the food problem of America whenever it becomes acute is shown by the fact that analyses reveal how readily fish can be used as a substitute for meat.

"Fresh Salmon has more nutrients in it, for instance, than round steak; Shad, more than chicken.

"There are some six million farms in the United States, and as the demand for food grows more pressing, each will probably have its own fish pond. Assuming that each farm will utilize only three pounds of fish a week, a total of more than a billion pounds would be available, releasing a nearly equivalent amount of other meat for urban consumption."

Bulletin No. 3, April 26, 1926.

FOR FURTHER READING

Teachers who wish to use this Bulletin for project or reading assignment will find allied subject matter and illustrations in "The Book of Fishes," published by the National Geographic Society, and in the following National Geographic Magazine articles: "America's Most Valuable Fishes." By Hugh M. Smith. 17 illustrations, May, 1912, pp. 494–514. "America's Surpassing Fisheries: Their Present Condition and Future Prospects, and How the Federal Government Fosters Them." By Hugh M. Smith. 35 illustrations, June, 1916, pp. 546–583. "Certain Citizens of the Warm Sea." By Louis L. Mowbray. 16 illustrations in color, 18 illustrations in black and white, January, 1922, pp. 27–62. "Devil-Fishing in the Gulf Stream." By John Oliver LaGorce. 7 illustrations, June, 1919, pp. 476–488. "Interesting Citizens of the Gulf Stream." By Dr. John T. Nichols. 11 illustrations, January, 1921, pp. 69–84. "Life on the Grand Banks." By Frederick William Wallace. 29 illustrations, July, 1921, pp. 1–28. "Oysters: The World's Most Valuable Water Crop." By Hugh M. Smith. 21 illustrations, March, 1913, pp. 257–281. "Fishes and Fisheries of Our North Atlantic Seaboard." By John Oliver LaGorce. 35 illustrations in black and white, 16 illustrations in color, December, 1923, pp. 567–634.

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LANDING TUNA AT HUBBARDS COVE, NOVA SCOTIA

The Tuna is an inhabitant of many seas. In North Atlantic waters it is known as the Horse Mackerel, in the North Sea as the Tunny, in the Mediterranean sometimes as the Great Albacore, and in California and southern Florida as the Tuna.

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The Overland Mail to Bagdad Avoids a War

ONE of the most remarkable overland mail routes in the world, the post route from Damascus to Bagdad has been compelled to change its route. Hostility of the Druse tribes against the French in Syria has made it impossible to dispatch motor cars over the desert directly to Bagdad.

Instead the traveler to Bagdad boards an automobile in Jerusalem The car crawls out of Jerusalem's narrow streets, beginning the journey with a long coast downward. The route to Jericho leads directly into the Jordan Valley. This depression goes more than six hundred feet below sea level.

Jericho is left in the dust and soon the tourist sees the river Jordan. Before the war one would have had to ferry across the Jordan, but now the Allenby Bridge serves motor car and camel alike.

Entering the Kingdom of Transjordania

The Jordan is the national boundary; west of it is Palestine under a British mandate from the League of Nations; east of it as the name implies, is Transjordania, an independent Arab kingdom which operates under the guidance, however, of the British Foreign Office. The route goes first to Es Salt, the largest city of Transjordania. From there it is a short run to Amman, capital of the kingdom.

Amman is described in the following communication to the National Geographic Society:

"Amman is the capital of the new kingdom. That name alone might suggest that more than a new shade of ink on the maps and the discussions of distant statesmen are necessary to give a kingdom permanency. It has been a capital for ages.

"The Ammonites, descendants of Lot, called it Rabbath Ammon when they ruled there. The creek which divides the village keeps its old name, Nahr Amman.

"Centuries later this city was the capital of one of the Greek republics of Decapolis; Ptolemy Philadelphus built an acropolis and renamed the place Philadelphia. The Romans and Crusaders came and it was one of their capitals. Others followed, until now it has new rulers.

"Amman resembles Bisbee, Arizona, with its two main streets of Tombstone Canyon and Brewery Gulch—a creek in the valley with houses, shops, and footpaths struggling back up the hillsides.

"Goats now are herded in the galleries through which the gay crowds passed to watch the sports of Roman days. In front of the Arab coffee-shops marble columns from the Greek acropolis lie in the road for benches, on which dusty Bedouins sit to smoke and gossip.

Britain Pays the Annual National Deficit

"The empires of the past which chose Amman as a capital built well, but they and their rulers have gone and been forgotten. The mighty powers which ruled it are a memory, but its life goes on just the same. Now it is chosen again, the kingdom has been baptized with a new name, and the maps reprinted as if it all were new.

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destructive floods, which, tearing down the narrow valley, have destroyed buildings and damaged even the Ka'aba. A terrible deluge took place, according to Moslem dating, on the 23d of Dhu'l Hajj, 1327 A. H. (After Hegira). This was A. D. 1909. The water reached nearly to the door of the Ka'aba and the whole court was flooded.

"The Ka'aba proper stands in an oblong space 250 paces long and 200 broad, surrounded by colonnades, which are used as schools and as a general meeting place for pilgrims. The outer inclosure has nineteen gates and six minarets. Within the inclosure, in addition to the Ka'aba, is the well of Zem Zem, the great pulpit, the staircase used to enter the Ka'aba door, and two small mosques called El Kubattain. The remainder of the space is occupied by pavements and gravel, where prayers are said by the four Mohammedan sects, each having its own allotted space.

Ancient Sacred Stone of Ka'aba is a Meteorite

"In the southeast corner of the Ka'aba, about 5 feet from the ground, is the famous Black Stone, the oldest treasure of Mecca. The stone is a fragment resembling black volcanic rock, sprinkled with reddish crystals, and worn smooth by the touch of millions. It is undoubtedly a meteorite and owes its reputation to its fall from the sky. Moslem historians do not deny that it was an object of worship before Mohammed. In Moslem tradition it is connected with the history of the fathers, beginning as far back as Adam.

"The word Ka'aba signifies a cube, although the measurements, according to Ali Bey, one of the earliest writers who gives us a good account of the pilgrim ceremonies, do not justify its being so called. Its height is 34 feet 4 inches. The four sides measure 38 feet 4 inches, 37 feet 2 inches, 31 feet 7 inches and 29 feet. The cloth covering is usually renewed every year. At present it is made of silk and cotton tissue woven at El Khurunfish, a factory in Cairo. The time of departure of the annual procession which takes it to Mecca is one of the great feast days in Cairo.

"Formerly, we are told, the whole of the Koran (Moslem Bible) was interwoven into the Ka'aba covering. Now the inscription contains the words: 'Verily, the first house founded for mankind to worship in is that at Mecca, a blessing and a direction to all Christians.' Seven other short chapters of the Koran are also woven into this tapestry.

Each Pilgrim Sacrifices an Animal

"Arriving within a short distance of Mecca, pilgrims, male and female, remove their ordinary clothing. They put on the 'ihram,' which consists of two pieces of white cloth, one tied around the loins and the other thrown over the back. Sandals may be worn, but not shoes, and the head must be uncovered. After certain ablutions the pilgrim enters the mosque, kisses the Black Stone, and runs around the Ka'aba seven times. After special prayers he proceeds to the place of Abraham, then drinks from the holy well, and once more kisses the Black Stone. After this follows the race between the two hills, Safa and Mirwa.

"Little books of ritual prayers to be used by the pilgrims are sold to every one. On the seventh day of the pilgrimage there is a sermon from the grand pulpit. On the eighth day the pilgrim goes to Mina, three miles distant from Mecca, and spends the night. The next morning he leaves for Arafat, another hill a short distance from Mecca. The following day is the great day of sacrifice, simultaneously observed throughout the whole Moslem world. Early in the morning the pilgrims go to Mina, where there are three pillars, called the Great Devil, the Middle Pillar, and the First One. Here each pilgrim flings seven pebbles to show his hatred of Satan and his love for God. He then performs a sacrifice of a sheep, goat, or camel, according to his means, the victim being placed toward the Ka'aba and the knife plunged into the animal's throat with the cry, 'Allahu Akbar.' This ceremony concludes the pilgrimage proper."

"Amman is a station on the Hedjaz Railroad, much used between Damascus and the south. However, the country has few funds for internal improvements, and the eternal conflict with the desert is hopeless. Its area is only 16,000 square miles, with a population of 400,000, exclusive of nomads.

"The annual budget amounts to $1,040,000, against a revenue of $500,000. Great Britain makes up the difference, one of the many donations toward maintaining an Arab policy."

Leaving Amman the new route swings sharply to the left and civilization is left behind. The overland mail clips off mile upon mile of flat and monotonous desert. Now and then the poorly marked trail goes by some ruined and deserted Arab fort. Still more ancient are the stones of a Roman Castle which lie stark and forgotten, a counterpart to the whitening skulls of buffalo that lay beside the trail of the old overland mail in our own American West.

A Junction with the Former Route

Part of the desert journey of the new Jerusalem to Bagdad route is not nearly as smooth and comfortable as the former trail out of Damascus. The car has to pass through a rocky plain. The stony surface is hard on tires and hard on the nerves of the passengers. Camp is pitched for the night in this region.

About noon the following day the cars reach a dry stream bed called Wadi Hauran. This is the junction with the former Damascus-Bagdad route. From here on the road is smooth and level so the car speeds along at forty miles an hour or better. Afternoon of the second day brings the motor caravan to the banks of the Euphrates at a place called Ramadi. From here it is a short run to Bagdad on the Tigris.

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ANOTHER ALLENBY BRIDGE

This bridge supported by boats crosses the Tigris at Bagdad. The new overland mail route out of Jerusalem passes over an Allenby bridge on the Jordan, a few miles out of Jericho.